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free press, would be sacrificed to a selfish desire to please. No! Such never has been our practice, and such we are determined it never shall be. It is the legitimate province of a free press, to let censure fall wherever it is deserved. We have cited in our pages before the tribunal of public opinion, several classes of the community, as impartiality and the cause of justice required, and shall Quakers be considered so privileged, and *so highly favoured*, as to expect to escape a lash, if they, by their conduct should on any occasion be found to deserve it? In the charge made against them in the present instance, let the public judge between them and their accuser. The writer of the note which gave the offence, retains the sentiments he formerly expressed in full force, and cannot admit the validity of the excuse, that the Quakers are right in declining all subjects which may lead to political controversy. Such timid conduct may be prudent, but it is not liberal. Instead of entering into a long discussion, let facts decide the controversy. If X.Y. can prove, by adducing their signatures, that many Quakers have signed the petition, or even that any one of their leading influential members has signed, then the writer of the note will, so far as these instances go, acknowledge his error; but if no such proof is brought forward, he will continue to withhold from the Quakers any praise for their liberality, and consider that they are actuated by a selfish, narrow, and exclusive spirit.

A correspondent has sent us the following letter:

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

AMIDST all the abuses, political, and moral, by which we are surrounded, it must prove a sensible

gratification, that the friends of religious toleration have engaged in their party all the talent that is free and honourable in the empire. The great cause of Catholic emancipation is become so popular too, that its enemies are ashamed in many places to avow their hostility. From this *GOOD NAME*, which the cause has now acquired, and the dishonour attached to the character of intolerance, we may predict with confidence the happiest results. Old prejudices will gradually wear away; new lights break in with the progress of information, and what men have been long accustomed to consider infamous, they will finally be brought about to resign altogether.

Yet are the disciples of bigotry still numerous, and still violent! Men who are not only leagued under mysterious oaths, in well known hostility to the religion and person of the Catholic, but whose persecuting spirit declares itself frequently in an open manner against him; braving at once the public authority that protects, and the public sentiment that pleads in his favour.

The communication from Tandragee,* which appeared in your last, may serve to illustrate this lamentable fact; and the following evidences, in a neighbouring quarter, of a corresponding spirit, must remove all doubt as to its existence and character. The *naked facts* should go before the public; and the independent press will not shrink from their exposure, though they should furnish a wretched *item* to the eloquent gentlemen of the Common Council, and swell the proof somewhat, that "all the Protestants of Ireland are not friendly to Catholic claims."

Lieutenant Hall, of the Lurgan yeomanry, was one of six or eight per-

* Orange Presbyterians!—Proh lugendum!!!

sons who, in that *liberal* and *enlightened* town, affixed their signatures to the Protestant petition. At the first public appearance of the corps afterwards, (on a day of inspection), Mr. Hall being absent, the yeomanry declared, they must lay down their arms, unless this obnoxious officer were cashiered. And they waited by deputation on Captain Brownlow, representing, that "any other conduct would be irreconcilable with their principles, as *Orangemen!*" This *soidisant* commander, making due allowance for the scruples of these conscientious gentlemen, *quorum pas magna fuit*, (though he has not effected the dismissal of Mr. Hall, and even *candidly* acknowledged his want of power to remove him,) has yielded so far to the arrogance of these furious bigots, as to engage that gentleman to absent himself from parade. This fact, and the following, I give you without comment.

The corps at Banford Green, (whose Anti-Catholic sentiments have been evinced on a former occasion,) resented, in a still more daring manner, a similar act of Capt. Robert Jaffray Nicholson. Not content with threats, they actually, with a few exceptions, *laid down their arms*, on Monday the 23d ult. The remonstrances of the inspecting officer were employed to no purpose. Capt Nicholson had been abroad on this day. Some of the men who seemed to regret their precipitancy, and sued on his return to have their arms restored, were denied this request, and stript of their uniform, together with their companions.

The arms, I have heard, are since given to others,

I remain, &c.

AMICUS.

Another correspondent has given a more full account of the transaction of the Banford corps. He states, that the corps consisted of 100 men.

About 40 laid down their arms. On their Captain's return, several of these asserted, that the act was not voluntary in them, but that their arms were forced from them by others. This excuse was admitted for a few, so that finally only 25 were rejected. They begged and intreated to be reinstated, and offered to make a public apology, but Capt. Nicholson, much to his honour, was firm, and their places have been since filled up by fresh recruits. Lieutenant Frazer of this corps also signed the petition. Much praise is due to these officers, for their firm, spirited, and liberal conduct on the occasion.

Of the business of Clare we have the following account:—

"Since my former letter another meeting of Presbytery was called by Mr. Adams, on his finding that the people, notwithstanding the recommendations of Presbytery, had proceeded to still more considerable acts of irregularity and violence. The day fixed being very wet, no meeting took place. Soon after, another meeting was appointed at Banbridge. Mr. Adams reported that the people of Clare, so far from respecting the desire of the Presbytery, had actually shut the doors of their meeting-house against him. The first Sunday this took place, he opened one of the doors by force, entered, and preached to a small audience. But the two succeeding Sundays, the doors were so secured, and the spirit of the people so high, he did not think it prudent to attempt entering the house. He asked the advice of Presbytery. The Presbytery agreed that they would support Mr. Adams to the utmost of their power, and sent one of their members to preach at Clare the next Sunday, and to declare the sentiments of the body. The member was

instructed to inform the people of the *illegality* of their proceedings; and to say that the Presbytery would never consent to their rejection of Mr. Adams, until they clearly proved, that Mr. Adams, from his immorality, neglect of duty, &c. &c. was unworthy of the pastoral office.

I request to know through some of the writers for the magazine, learned in the law, whether the *Test Act* as to Ireland, be actually repealed or not, and if so, when? As a lawyer lately affirmed, that Baron M'Cleland had said that it was not. I wish also to know if, supposing that this act be repealed, members of the established church are obliged to qualify, and if *Dissenters only* are exempted by the repeal of the act? A. Z.

DOCUMENTS.

HUNTER, MAYOR.

IN a meeting or assembly of the Mayor, Aldermen, and Liverymen of the several companies of the City of London, in Common-Hall assembled, at the Guildhall of the said City, on Thursday, 26th day of March, 1812,

Resolved—1. That we have long seen and felt, with the deepest concern and anxiety, the prevalence and baneful effects of a corrupt and unconstitutional influence in the administration of the government, equally dangerous to the honour and independence of the Crown, and to the liberty and happiness of the people.

2. That among other pernicious effects of this system, the public resources have been dissipated in wild and disgraceful projects, in numerous frauds and peculations, in useless places, pensions, sinecures, and reversions, and in expensive establishments, having no apparent object but the increase of ministerial patronage, creating an oppressive and overwhelming weight of taxation, rendered doubly grievous by the inquisitorial and arbitrary mode of its exaction.

3. That we have seen a delusive and factitious paper-currency, substituted in place of the valid coin of the realm, and the pernicious progress of measures and

laws designed to give a forced value to such unnatural currency, evidently indicating the approaching confusion of the public finances, and the ruin of the public creditors.

4. That under the protection of a corrupt influence, which undermines all public spirit and principle, we have witnessed the most shameless and insulting disregard of public opinion, degrading instances of which have been the screening from justice two individuals, who were then, and now are, ministers of the crown, and who have been openly charged with corrupt trafficking in seats in the House of Commons; by the refusal to inquire into the calamitous and disgraceful expedition to Walcheren; and in the re-appointment of the Duke of York, against the unequivocal sense of the nation.

5. That we have long suffered under an impolitic and ruinous system of restrictions on commerce, which, by an unhappy policy, have converted the impotent threats of the enemy into a substantial injury, and to which is to be attributed the almost general ruin of our merchants, and the starving and wretched condition of the population of the manufacturing districts, who, driven to despair, claim relief in a change of system, instead of an extension of our already sanguinary penal code.

6. That we have seen foreign mercenaries introduced into our armies, and placed in command over Englishmen, at a time in which a great portion of our fellow-subjects are denied a participation of the very privileges which these foreigners enjoy.

7. That we have for a series of years made many earnest representations of our grievances by petitions to the Throne, and to both houses of Parliament, none of which have yet been redressed; on the contrary, we observe an increased determination to resist inquiry, to protect abuses, and to screen from punishment public delinquents, and open violators of the law and the constitution, while the right of petitioning and the free access to the throne, secured by the Bill of Rights, have been denied to the people, and the public Press has been either corrupted or persecuted.

8. That these, and all other oppressions and grievances, are solely to be attributed to the corrupt and inadequate state of the representation of the people.

9. That from the avowed hostility of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent to the system so long pursued, and from a reliance